CAP ALERTING SYSTEM

Communications Actions

The purpose of the CAP Command and Control Communications (C3) System is to provide commanders a survivable communications capability in a stressed communications environment. This document directs specific preparedness steps to ensure this capability is available. The communications staff at each HQ will implement the following actions when notified of changes to the CAP Alerting System.

RED (Severe) Severe risk of terrorist attack or disaster operations

Significantly increased possibility of CAP disaster response operations. CAP may need to react immediately to a developing situation. Our communications networks must be extremely responsive under this level of alert.

- **Key Action:** Confidence checks of communications networks will be conducted at least **once every six hours** during CAP Alert Level Red. See Notes.

ORANGE (HIGH) High risk of terrorist attack or disaster operations

Increased possibility of CAP disaster operations. CAP may need to react rapidly to a developing situation. Our communications networks must be very responsive under this level.

- **Key Action:** Confidence checks of communications networks will be conducted at least **once daily** during CAP Alert Level Orange. See Notes.

YELLOW (ELEVATED) Significant risk of terrorist attacks or disaster operations

Distinct possibility of CAP disaster response operations. CAP may need to react quickly to a developing situation. Our communications networks must be at a ready state under this level.

- **Key Action:** Confidence checks of communications networks will be conducted at least **weekly** during CAP Alert Level Yellow. See Notes.

BLUE (GUARDED) General risk of terrorist attacks or disaster operations

Increased possibility of CAP disaster response operations. CAP may need to react promptly to a developing situation. Our communications networks should be at a routine state under this level.

- **Key Action:** Review procedures and requirements for elevated threat levels. Check to ensure confidence in communications links with emergency response teams. See Notes.

GREEN (LOW) Low risk of terrorist attacks or disaster operations

A normal possibility of CAP disaster response operations. As always, CAP may need to react to a developing situation. Our communications networks should be at a routine state under this level of alert.

- **Key Action:** Refine plans for emergency operations. Train on emergency plans and capabilities. Maintain resources. Meet regularly with external organizations to present CAP support capabilities and to develop MOU's and operational implementation plans. See Notes.

Notes:

Under CAP Alert Level Green:

- All units should conduct routine radio operations and training per their established plans.

Under CAP Alert Level Blue:

- Region HQ and Wing HQ should review the necessary communications actions called for in this plan and their respective emergency communications plans and ensure they are prepared to implement as needed.
- Conduct increased radio operations and organized training to ensure that communications systems are available to support response teams. This should be exercised at the discretion of the respective headquarters.
- National HQ will conduct monthly confidence checks on the National ALE Net between the NOC and key communications points within CAP and externally to partner agencies as required.

Under CAP Alert Levels Yellow, Orange and Red:

- National HQ will conduct the National Command Net on the national HF-SSB frequencies or on the National ALE Net (if available) to satisfy contingency communications requirements between the region HQ's and National HQ. Each region should appoint a minimum of one primary and one alternate station to participate in this net. This assignment may rotate between multiple stations as needed. The National Operations Center (NOC) (Headcap 22) and the National Technology Center (NTC) (Headcap 33) will enter this net. The NTC will serve as comm backup to the NOC. Confidence checks should be performed by all stations at the interval required according to the CAP Alerting System Level to ensure the networks are operating properly. Only stations appointed by their respective HQ may participate in this net.
- Each region HQ will conduct a network on their assigned HF-SSB frequency to satisfy contingency communications requirements within the region. Each region and wing should appoint a minimum of one primary and one alternate station to participate in this net. This assignment may rotate between multiple stations as needed. Confidence checks should be performed by all stations and between each station and their respective command staff at the interval called for according to the CAP Alerting System Level. Other stations may participate in these networks as required to support region comm plans.
- Each wing HQ will conduct a network on their region HF-SSB frequency (as coordinated with their region HQ) and on their VHF repeaters as necessary to satisfy contingency communications requirements within the wing. Each unit should appoint a minimum of one station to participate in this net. This assignment may rotate between stations as needed. Confidence checks should be performed by all stations and between each station and their respective command staff at the interval specified according to the CAP Alerting System Level. All stations may participate in these networks in support of wing comm plans.
- The primary purpose of these nets is to ensure critical command and control capability is survivable in the event of the loss or impairment of public telecommunications networks. As such, the designated stations should maintain direct contact with their respective command staff by CAP radio networks (HF or VHF) to the maximum extent possible. Back-up telephone, pager and internet-based systems should be tested frequently. All stations should maintain a listening watch on assigned frequencies to the maximum extent possible.
- Where available VHF/FM may be used to satisfy any communications requirement listed but only if these communications *do not* rely on infrastructure (repeaters) which lacks emergency backup power. Where infrastructure emergency power is not available, HF-SSB should be considered the primary communications resource.
- Primary stations designated in each network should be equipped with an alternate power source capable of powering the station for at least 8 hours. In addition, it is strongly encouraged that all participating stations be equipped with similar backup power facilities.